



DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND NATURAL RESOURCES

DIVISION OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION AND ARCHEOLOGY

123 W. Nye Lane, Room 208

Capitol Complex

Carson City, Nevada 89710

(702) 687-5138

August 7, 1992

MEMORANDUM

TO: INTERESTED PARTIES

FROM: RON JAMES, State Historic Preservation Officer

SUBJECT: 9/1/92 MEETING ON THE COMSTOCK

As I explained to you, we will meet on September 1, 1992 to discuss a comprehensive planning program for the Comstock. The meeting will be held at Andria Daley's house at #2 South A Street, Virginia City beginning at 9:00 a.m. Andria is an historian and serves as the chair of the Comstock Historic District Commission. Her house has been owned by the Piper family (Piper's Opera House is nearby) and by Lucius Beebe, Comstock entrepreneur of the 1950s. Andria has made arrangements for a special-order group lunch at the Sharon house for \$8.00 a person. Lunch will consist of home-made pasties, water cress soup and salad. I need a head count of people interested in lunch by August 25 to make reservations.

The purpose of this meeting is to determine the needs of a variety of agencies with regard to planning on the Comstock. I propose, therefore, the following agenda:

1. Discussion of the overall needs for planning on the Comstock.
2. Discussion of specific agency needs for planning on the Comstock.
3. Agencies's ability to participate in various facets of the planning process.
4. Outline of scope(s) of work for the project(s) and the development of a timeline.
5. Discussion of the implementation of the program described in the plan.

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6. Inspections of archeological sites as time permits. Wear clothing appropriate for the outback.

Be prepared to discuss what your agency can do for the project in realistic terms and time frame. Enclosed is a draft copy of the "Plan for the Archeological Investigation of the Virginia City Landmark District" for your consideration and to initiate discussion. As you consider your involvement in this planning process, please keep in mind that implementation is critical. The Comstock has been planned to death with little or no implementation. Local sentiment will be at best derisive if this exercise does not yield tangible results. This Division is committed to taking its portion of the plan to its logical end, and I firmly believe that this must be the attitude of all of us as we work on the project.

At this point, it may be useful for all the players to know something of one another and the inspiration for involvement as I understand it. If I incorrectly characterize your interests, please forgive me and make the necessary corrections at our meeting.

1. Larry Prater is a Storey County Commissioner with obvious interest in the effect of any planning effort on resource use.
2. Lynn Hughes or her designee will represent the Silver City Town Advisory Board and has the same type of interests as Larry.
3. The Comstock Historic District Commission is a state agency mandated to encourage the preservation of area cultural resources. It is represented by Andria Daley, Chair, and Bernadette Francke, Inspector/Clerk. Bernadette is creating a research library of historic photographs of the district.
4. National Park Service, Western Regional Office will be represented by three to five people including Margaret Pepin-Donat, Chief of the National Register Program, Leo Barker, an archeologist and Ann Houston, an historian. National Park Service has played a crucial role in every cultural-resource planning effort on the Comstock. The Secretary of the Interior has directed the Western Regional Office to participate in planning efforts on the Comstock, and in response to this mandate, Leo and Ann issued a report and have taken an active interest in the area. Most recently, NPS has expressed an interest in implementing a Geographic Information System for the area to serve as an example to other historic districts.

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5. The Bureau of Land Management will be represented by Karl Kipping of the Carson City District Office, John Matthiessen, Carson City Area Manager, Prill Mecham and Peggy Waski, archeologists in the Carson Office and Pat Barker, State Archeologist for the BLM. BLM processes applications for mining on BLM land and so has had a long history of participation in cultural resource planning and management within the district. Because of this involvement and because of the Secretary of the Interior's expressed interest, BLM has taken the initiative in working with the planning process. Because of disputed and unclear property boundaries and claims, BLM is also interested in a Cadastral Survey of property on the Comstock.

6. Steve Simionic of the Environmental Protection Agency is involved in resource management on the Comstock by way of a survey for potential Super-Fund sites. Although the mandate is removed for cultural resource management, EPA is, nevertheless, funding work which may be useful to this process and which need not be duplicated. This includes the creation of GIS-produced data for the Comstock as well as site-specific information. Ultimately, EPA work on specific sites may include the need for archeological mitigation.

7. The University of Nevada, Reno Anthropology Department will be represented by Don Hardesty, an historical archeologist with considerable experience in mining-related resources. Don conducts a summer field school which has the potential of playing a crucial role in the implementation of the plan. Ken Fliess, the Department demographer is working on the computerization of the area's censuses, documents which have and will play an important role in understanding specific resources and in developing contexts for evaluation and interpretation.

8. Marcia Growdon, Chair of both the State Advisory Board for Historic Preservation and Archeology and the newly-created Commission for Cultural Affairs, will represent state-wide cultural resource concerns. The Division will be represented by myself and by Alice Baldrice, long-standing archeologist with the Division, by Gene Hattori, an historical archeologist and author of Northern Paiutes on the Comstock: Archeological and Ethnohistory of an American Indian Population in Virginia City, Nevada. In addition, Richard Adkins, a graduate student from Arizona State University, who has participated in the Division's planning project for the Comstock from the beginning, plans to attend.

9. Richard Moreno, acting publisher of Nevada Magazine, is also the Nevada representative to the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

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These are the players and how I perceive your interests and potential involvement. I look forward to your participation and the development of a proactive program of cultural resource management. The Comstock is simply too important not to receive a concerted, aggressive effort of promotion and development. Please let me know if you have questions, suggestions, or comments, and let me know if you wish a reservation for lunch. Thanks in advance for your cooperation and assistance.

/rj